

## **Staff Volunteering Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

NHP values the contributions of volunteers and recognises the significant impact that volunteering can have on both the individual and the organisation. As a charity, we are committed to fostering volunteering and actively encourage individuals to take up volunteering within the communities they live/work. This policy outlines how NHP supports its employees in participating in volunteering activities.

### **2. Scope and Principles**

- 2.1 Employees volunteering will always be subject to the prior agreement of their line manager and must reflect the service needs of NHP. The release of employees from work to participate in voluntary work must be balanced against other demands and priorities of their role within the department/team.
- 2.2 Employees are eligible to apply for paid volunteering leave to undertake approved voluntary work, for up to four hours of their equivalent working days per financial year (April – March) during normal working hours.
- 2.3 Volunteering leave can be used flexibly, either as a single 4-hour block or in smaller increments, such as one hour at a time. Employees must ensure that taking volunteering leave does not impact on their ability to complete their required working hours.
- 2.4 Any expenses (e.g., travel or equipment costs) incurred as a result of volunteering must be agreed upon and raised with the 'host volunteering' organisation. NHP will not reimburse expenses unless the volunteering is part of an NHP-based volunteering opportunity.
- 2.5 Unused or outstanding volunteering leave cannot be carried forward to the next financial year.
- 2.6 NHP offers four hours of paid time off annually for volunteering. Employees are encouraged to engage with local charities, schools, or other local projects in their volunteering efforts.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **3.1 Employee's Responsibilities**

- 3.1.1 Employees should discuss their interest in volunteering activities as part of one-on-one meetings with their line manager. The employee will use the volunteering as a way to gain experience, personal development, and/or to participate in the wider community engagement agenda.
- 3.1.2 Employees must complete the Employee Volunteering Application Form (Appendix 1) and submit it to their line manager at least four weeks before the activity is due to take place.
- 3.1.3 Employees must attach a signed and dated Risk Assessment form, (Appendix 2) from the host organisation before submitting it to their line manager.
- 3.1.5 Employees must ensure that the host organisation provides appropriate safety equipment, clothing, and supervision. They should also be aware of emergency evacuation procedures and how to obtain First Aid.
- 3.1.6 Once the volunteering activity is provisionally agreed upon, employees must submit the completed and signed forms to their line manager for final approval of volunteering leave.
- 3.1.7 Upon completing each volunteering activity, employees must complete an evaluation of the experience and email it to their line manager. The evaluation questions are in appendix 3.
- 3.1.8 Employees must always follow the NHP expected behaviours when working as a volunteer.

#### **3.2 Line Manager's Responsibilities**

- 3.2.1 Line managers should use one-on-one meetings to discuss relevant volunteering activities with employees which could help them gain experience, personal development, and engage in community activities. These discussions should be recorded in 1-1 supervision notes. The neighbourhood and staying well teams will be able to offer advice on potential volunteering opportunities.
- 3.2.2 Managers should consider all requests for volunteering and manage them flexibly. If a request is declined due to work or operational reasons, the line

manager must communicate this to the employee promptly and discuss possible alternative activities or dates.

3.2.3 Managers must record the time off for volunteering on payroll forms.

A copy of the completed Employee's Volunteering Application Form, along with the risk assessment, should be kept on the employee's SafeHR record.

#### **4. Time Off to Volunteer**

4.1 **Request:** Staff members must inform and confirm, in writing, with their manager when they intend to take time off for volunteering.

4.2 **Volunteer Organisation:** Staff should provide their manager with the name of the organisation they are volunteering for.

4.3 **Approval:** The manager will confirm that this time has been agreed.

4.4 **Recording Time Off:** Managers are required to record the time off requested for volunteering.

4.5 Requests must be approved before employees commit to volunteering. NHP supports volunteering for charities, schools, or not-for-profit organisations that align with NHP's values. Volunteering for political or lobbying projects or extreme physical activities may not be supported.

4.6 If volunteering requires more time than the allotted four hours, additional time may be requested as annual leave or Time Off in Lieu (TOIL). This will be subject to approval by the line manager.

4.7 Requests for volunteering leave may be declined if business needs cannot accommodate the absence. Any abuse of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

#### **5. Non-Contractual Nature of Policy**

This policy is non-contractual and applies to employees only.

## Employee Volunteering Application Form

Full Name	
Job Title	
Line Manager	
Contact Number	
Email Address	

### Section 2: Volunteering Details

<b>Name of Volunteering Organisation</b>	
<b>Organisation Address</b>	
<b>Contact Person at Organisation</b>	
<b>Contact Number</b>	
<b>Email Address</b>	
<b>Type of Volunteering Activity</b>	
<b>Proposed Date(s) of Volunteering</b>	
<b>Total Time Requested</b>	

### Section 3: Approval

<b>Reason for Volunteering</b>
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Personal Development	
Community Engagement	
Skills Development	
Other	
<b>Volunteering Activity Provider Checklist Completed</b>	
Yes	
No	
<b>Risk Assessment form Attached</b>	
Yes	
No	

#### Section 4: Employee Declaration

I declare that the information provided in this form is true and correct. I understand that approval is required before undertaking any volunteering activities and that time off will be recorded accordingly.

- Employee Signature:

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- Date: -----

#### Section 5: Line Manager Approval

- Comments: \_

- Approved:

- Yes

- No

- If No, reason for denial:

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- Line Manager Name:

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- Line Manager Signature:

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- Date: -----

Instructions: Please complete this form and submit it to your line manager at least four weeks before the proposed volunteering activity date.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Volunteering activity risk assessment form**

#### **Section 1: Basic Information**

- Employee Name:

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- Department:

-----

- Line Manager:  
-----
- Volunteering Organisation:  
-----
- Contact Person:  
-----
- Contact Number:  
-----
- Activity Location:  
-----
- Activity Description:  
-----
- Proposed Date(s) of Activity:  
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**Section 2: Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment**

<b>Hazard Identified</b>	<b>Potential Risk</b>	<b>Risk Level (Low/Medium/High)</b>	<b>Control Measures (How will the risk be minimized?)</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

**Section 3: Emergency Procedures**

- Nearest First Aid Available:  
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- Emergency Contact Person at Volunteering Location:  
-----
- Emergency Contact Number:  
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#### **Section 4: Employee Acknowledgment**

I have reviewed the risks associated with this volunteering activity and agree to follow all control measures outlined in this assessment. I understand the importance of safety and will adhere to the safety protocols provided.

- **Employee Signature:**

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- **Date:** -----

#### **Section 5: Volunteering Organisation Acknowledgment**

I confirm that we have reviewed the risks associated with the volunteering activity and provided the necessary safety instructions and measures to the participant.

- **Volunteering Organisation Representative Name:**

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- **Title:** -----

- **Signature:**

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- **Date:** -----

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#### **Section 6: Line Manager Review**

I have reviewed the risk assessment and approve the participation of the employee in this volunteering activity.

- **Line Manager Name:**

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- **Signature:**

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- **Date:** -----
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**Instructions:** This form must be completed and signed by the employee, the volunteering organisation, and the line manager before the volunteering activity takes place.

### Appendix 3

#### Evaluation form

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Volunteer role</b>	
<b>What will I take away from the experience?</b>	
<b>Skills I might be able to apply to my role?</b>	
<b>Will you continue to volunteer?</b>	

